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MGSGREN

engaging the global children's entertainment industry

JULY/AUGUST 2014



A boatload of promising projects lie straight ahead at Cartoon Forum 2014



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

The biggest event in kids entertainment is moving to Miami next year and will take place from February 23-26. We're looking forward to this fresh start, and we hope you join us in our sunny new location for four days of can't-miss networking, deal-making and market intelligence—it's the best business investment you'll make in 2015.

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Editorial

On the move

Full confession: I never go into a press cycle knowing what I will write on this page. In fact, I don't usually write my editorial until the proofs are back from the printer and I'm facing the dropdead-deadline. It's at that time that something I've come to know as the worms of fear (a deadline-induced nausea that pushed me through graduate school) kick in and force me to spit my ideas out. Today, though, I'm a tad distracted.



Along with dealing with proof day, I'm also staring down the prospect of a 24-hour journey to China in economy class, which begins tomorrow. For those of you who may have missed our marketing efforts, we're holding the first-ever Kidscreen East event in Qingdao, China—a tiny seaside city of just eight million people. Planning

an event from thousands of miles—and several time zones—away has been challenging. Ultimately, I think it will be worth it as it has the potential to be fairly groundbreaking, bringing Chinese and Western kids entertainment people together in a way that hasn't been done before. Who knows what it might result in a year from now? But at this moment, my mind is brimming over. What could go wrong? What did I miss in the conference planning? Are they really going to serve me gruel on China Eastern Airlines, as promised on its website?

Another source of preoccupation is the fact that we're getting ready to announce a big move for Kidscreen Summit. When I'm half-way across the world, we'll be rolling out the news that our premier event is moving to Miami. We'll be hosting our annual schmooze-fest between February 23 and 26 at the beautifully appointed Intercontinental Miami in the city's business district. Personally, I am very excited about the move. The venue is fresh and opens up a host of new possibilities when it comes to content presentation and networking. And as a Canadian, the prospect of February sunshine doesn't hurt, either. I can't stop thinking about what we can do in the new space. And now you can see why I'm a bit discombobulated at the time of writing. Then again, I've got 20 hours in Wififree airspace to contemplate it all. Oh joy.

Cheers.

Lana



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Cartoon Forum

As the industry preps for a trip to Toulouse, we take a look at some of the hot projects on the pitch sked p30



Cover Our cover features an ad for hit CGI-animated preschool series *Zou* from Cyber Group Studios, while our inside editorial cover sports an image of Irish prodco Kavaleer's Cartoon Forum contender *Kiva Can Do.*











Why? Because your team deserves to shine.

We are now accepting entries for the sixth annual Kidscreen Awards, our industry's only truly global celebration of excellence in children's TV content and broadcasting.

This year, we're adding a "Best New Series" category to give single out brand-new shows that have launched within the last year.

HEADS UP: Early-Bird entry fees are in effect, but for a limited time only!

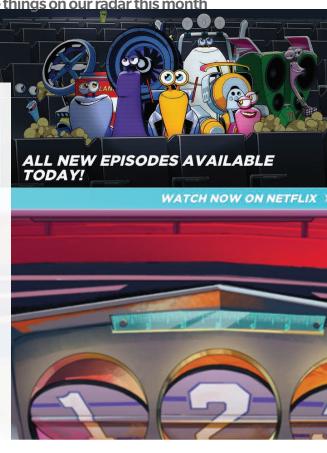
Full details on Deadlines, Categories, Eligibility, Judging and Entering are available at...

awards.kidscreen.com



Turning to the tried and true

Despite its disappointing box-office run, DreamWorks Animation kept Turbo alive in December with the debut of its Turbo Fast original Netflix series. Now with 15 launched eps and two Emmy nominations, Netflix says it's pleased with the show's performance, but what that means is unclear given the SVOD giant's reluctance to share metrics. What is clear, however, is that DreamWorks is addressing the challenge of drawing viewers to a non-linear show in a way that's been embraced by linear broadcasters for the last decade. It has launched a revamped Turbo website with more content, fresh games, collectible badges, customized avatars, new episodes and more eye-catching links to Netflix. According to published reports DreamWorks says the site's unique users have increased 126%, and it plans to use the web strategy for upcoming Netflix originals like King Julien and Puss In Boots. But unlike series-based websites of yore, Turbo's is completely mobile-friendly and available in nine languages, keys for reaching more kids who can't seem to put those iPads down.





A phoenixlike return?

Mobile gaming phenomenon Flappy Bird is flying back to app stores for a fall re-release, and this time it's taking a page from feathered competitor Angry Birds by jumping into the licensing fray. Deals with Canada's Tech 4 Kids (toys, collectibles) and the UK's Character World (kids bedding) are inked. So, could it be that creator Dong Nguven's decision to pull the app at its zenith in February was a marketing ploy all along?



3 Hybrid toys multiply

Bringing toys to life in video games proved a popular formula for Activision's Skylanders and Disney Infinity. The two action-figure-comedigital-games competed neckin-neck last year for the top spot in the physical-digital play market. This year, however, they won't be alone. Look for Lego Fusion, Nintendo's amiibo and Fuhu's Morpho Pods to take a piece of the pie, if not flood the market.



Ready to rumble

While Amazon lobbies the US government for permission to test its delivery drones in open skies, CEO Jeff Bezos must also deal with a lawsuit from the Federal Trade Commission over unauthorized mobile app purchases made by children. Apple settled with the FTC over similar charges by offering refunds of at least US\$32.5 million and changing its billing practices. We guess it's Amazon's turn now.



Content renewal

Following a series of high-level exec departures at Zodiak Kids. new CEO Jean-Philippe Randisi is making sure its production houses continue to churn out top-notch kids content. Randisi has hired former HIT exec Michael Carrington as CEO of Zodiak Kids-owned prodco The Foundation, a live-action and preschool specialist. There's no word vet, though, on what Randisi has in store for animation house Marathon Media.



To keep up with the news as it happens, check out **Kidscreen.com** daily.

HotStuff

Versatility with an edge

Canada's Banger Films evolves from music docs to kids productions



Super-serving tween boys, the prodco's Gaming Show landed a 10-ep commission from Disney XD

Who Best known for its adult-oriented, music-based feature documentaries, Toronto, Canada-based Banger Films has earned a reputation for producing award-winning film and television productions. And with no intentional strategy to create kids content, the company eventually caught the eye of Canada's Family Channel in 2013 when the broadcaster was looking for a production partner for its Big Ticket Summer Concert special. Eventually, Banger was enlisted to provide light-

ing, design and editing services for the TV special. The partnership then paved the way for Banger to develop *The Grizzly Cup*, an outdoor adventure-based reality competition series for kids that premiered on Disney XD in August 2013 and was picked up for a second season this year. The prodco's ongoing shift into original kids content, with a focus on tween boys, ultimately led to creation of kid-centric division B-Minors earlier this year. Its first official project is *Gaming Show (In My Parents' Garage)*, which recently won a 10-episode commission from Disney XD and is expected to premiere in late fall 2014, with the goal of bringing kid videogame culture closer to TV audiences.

Quality over quantity Banger Films co-founder Scot McFadyen says the company's recent success has been a pleasant surprise. "If someone told me four years ago that we

would start a kids division, I wouldn't have believed it. But that's just the way things have happened," he says. "You develop one thing, you do it well, and it leads to something else."

He notes that the majority of Banger's employees are also now parents to boys, which has helped the company get a better sense of its new audience. Created by Jesse Shamata (*Grizzly Cup*) and executive produced by McFadyen and his Banger cofounding partner Sam Dunn, *Gaming Show* follows young gamer and host Jesse Sukunda and his two friends, Julia and lan, as they make a DIY web series dedicated to gaming.

Segments of the magazine-style show include new videogame tests, weekly news reports and celebrity appearances. The series' pilot debuted on April 21 and encouraged its audience to provide online feedback. "Everyone is having trouble getting six- to 11-year-old boys to come back to TV because they are all on the internet, so we were fascinated with how we could create a portal between the two," says McFadyen.

One of the challenges of producing a kid culture-inspired series, he adds, is ensuring each episode keeps pace with evolving trends. "Staying connected is a challenge as things change so fast for kids in this age group. We have to keep our production schedule really tight and ensure the stories are fresh."

Next up With DHX Media set to distribute *Gaming Show* internationally, and more production locked for *Grizzly Cup* and *Big Ticket*, McFadyen says B-Minors will continue to do what it does best—offer edgy, live-action content for tweens with a hands-on approach. The company is also looking to expand its online presence. "A new B-Minors website is coming and we really want to build it out online like a multi-channel network that is curated for kids. There is a lot of room for growth, but we have to be careful to not grow too fast." –Jeremy Dickson



kidscreen 50 T

Are you hot enough?

Kidscreen's final print issue of 2014 will rank and profile the world's top 50 kids entertainment companies. If you want yours to be in the Hot50 mix, now is the time to put your hat in the ring.

We're accepting submissions until Friday, August 1—and it's totally FREE! All you have to do is fill out our easy online form at **hot50.kidscreen.com** and tell us about your company's three biggest achievements from the last 12 months in one of these business categories:

Production
 Distribution
 Broadcasting
 Licensing
 Digital Media

You are welcome to submit in more than one category—you just have to fill out a different form for each one. And obviously, you'll want to focus on achievements that are relevant to each category you're submitting in.

In August, we'll invite all Kidscreen readers to review the submissions online and tell us which company they think is tops in each category. (We know what you're thinking, but don't worry! Our system only allows bona fide Kidscreen subscribers to vote, and only one time in each category.)

The Kidscreen Hot50 will be determined by tallying these votes, and we will announce the final rankings on October 22 in our Kidscreen Daily newsletter and with a press release to all relevant trade media.

Companies that make it into the Kidscreen Hot50 will be featured in a special print issue streeting on December 8. It will be mailed to Kidscreen's full circulation list, plus distributed at NATPE (1,200 copies) and Kidscreen Summit (1,500 copies).

We'll also showcase the Kidscreen Hot50 companies on a dedicated microsite for a full year, and then archive this content so it's still searchable and accessible online.

If you have any questions about the Kidscreen Hot50, please email Jocelyn Christie (ichristie@brunico.com).

people











As the SVOD wars heat up, the battle is shifting to the kids space. Streaming giants are beefing up their kids programming with new and original series and are on the hunt for the talent to head up the new divisions. For its part, Netflix is bringing aboard former Nickelodeon SVP of live-action development Brian Wright [A]. He is overseeing original kids and family programming, a first for Netflix. He's charged with leading the development and production of exclusive live-action, animated and preschool series for Netflix and Netflix Kids.

In a different kind of battle, Mind Candy CEO Michael Acton Smith [B] is stepping aside as CEO to focus more on the business's creative side, recognizing that's where his true strengths lie. He founded Mind Candy 10 years ago, and saw the breakout success of Moshi Monsters. With 2012 revenues exceeding

US\$80 million, the company has built up a brand recognized worldwide, and is continuing to push its products with new releases like PopJam, an Instagram-like network for kids. **Divinia Knowles**, currently Mind Candy's COO, will step into the role of president while the board looks for a new CEO.

Meanwhile Zodiak Kids and HIT Entertainment have also experienced an executive shuffle. Michael Carrington [C] left his VP position at HIT Entertainment to step into the role of CEO of The Foundation. a Zodiak Kids-owned UK prodco. While at HIT, Carrington led the creative side as VP of global content and executive producer and was well-known for putting brands like Thomas & Friends back on track creatively. He will work with The Foundation's managing director Gwen **Hughes** on the company's current slate of programs, including Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge, Let's Play,

Millie Me, Tickety Toc and The Floogals.

Replacing Carrington at HIT Entertainment is industry veteran Christopher **Keenan**. As the new VP of creative and executive producer, he brings more than 25 years of experience in the animation, kids and family entertainment industries. Previously, he served as SVP of creative affairs for Warner Bros. Animation. In his new role as head of global content and production, Keenan is overseeing HIT's global content and development. Over this past year, Keenan has already worked with HIT as a consulting creative executive on the new Bob the Builder series.

Further beefing up HIT's global content strategy is the addition of three new content team members. **Karen Davidsen [D]** is the new director of production for global content, **Phil Molloy** take the title of senior creative manager of global content, and **Luca Magnani** is now

global brand director for Thomas & Friends. With 20 years of experience in the biz, Davidsen returns to HIT from a stint at Disney, where she was director of production and original programming. In her new role, she is responsible for the organizational aspects of production scheduling and budgeting and is overseeing production personnel and identifying new studios and production talent.

Over at Saban Brands, Kendall Doty has been named VP of digital. The former executive director of digital for the Hub Network, Doty will look to grow the company's digital services and products across online, mobile, apps, games, social media and e-commerce. In her new position, Doty is looking after all digital strategies for Saban's portfolio, which includes Power Rangers, Paul Frank, Julius Jr. and Emojiville,

its latest multiplatform property launching in partnership with toyco Jakks Pacific. During her four years at Hub Network, Doty launched and oversaw all digital initiatives for popular brands including My Little Pony, Transformers, Family Game Night, Strawberry Shortcake, R.L. Stine's Goosebumps and The Haunting Hour.

Speaking of digital, L.A.-based MarVista Entertainment has just tapped its EVP of distribution Vanessa Shapiro to lead a new division called MarVista Digital Entertainment. The new outfit, which launches August 1, has been set up to license original and acquired content to online platforms across North America. The prodco and distributor already has a sizable library of original content, co-productions and third-party acquisitions, including more than 300 films and 2,000 hours of TV content.

For more People Moves, head over to kidscreen.com/category/people-moves





Growing up with a love for ballet and acting, Sarah Noonan knew she would pursue an artistic career. but she never imagined Ellen **Degeneres** would be her "in" to a future in kids TV. Now with a new role in live action, the Nickelodeon vet and casting connoisseur is living her dream.

Casting skills lead to larger role at Nick

The gig Nickelodeon's SVP of live-action content, overseeing all development, casting and liveaction production for the kids network.

Assistant life After finishing high school in Sacramento, California, Noonan's artistic aspirations led her to the University of California at Irvine, where she completed a Bachelor's degree in Theater. "It was much to my parents' chagrin," she says. But it didn't dissuade her from attending a summer theater program at Irvine's South Coast Rep post-university, or from heading to L.A. with her new theater friends to pursue an acting career. "I was an aspiring actress for about five minutes. I guickly realized that I loved directing my friends and working behind the scenes. I eventually ended up being Ellen Degeneres's first assistant, and that was my 'in' to TV," she says. Once her stint with Ellen came to an end, Noonan took a job with Nickelodeon in 1998 as an assistant in the talent department. "The transition from Ellen's world, where the comedy is always clean, to kids was seamless. With kids comedy, there is a goofiness and playfulness that I love."

Talent watch While an assistant at Nickelodeon, Noonan began doing voiceover casting for promos on the side before getting an opportunity to head up casting for the company's animation studio. "I started with SpongeBob doing celebrity guest casting," she says, noting that her biggest "get" was landing Johnny Depp for an episode. "It was just a cool day. I had such a blast working on that show."

Besides drawing inspiration early on from Ellen, Noonan singles out former Nickelodeon human resources exec Catherine Houser as a person of great influence in her career. "She once said, 'Don't come to your boss with a problem. Always come with a solution to the problem."

Using her growing experience and feeding off the advice of her peers, Noonan worked her way up the ranks to SVP of casting, her most recent position, where she spearheaded casting and talent relations for all Nick live-action and animated series, pilots, specials and on-air promotions.

With a growing list of responsibilities, she says the biggest challenge is finding all three elements that make a hit show. "You need a great visionary with a great idea and a great cast. But there have been many times when I've said, 'This is not the right cast. We have to keep looking.' Or sometimes you have a creator that maybe needs a little help," she says. "Finding that next hitmaker is tremendously hard, especially in the kids space, because Nick has a specific tone and voice."

Being able to spot and develop new talent in unique ways led to a special moment in Noonan's career in 2013, when she launched a talent development program at The Groundlings improv school in L.A. to help discover future Nick stars. "Nick gives you the ability to say, 'I have an idea for

how we can do something better," says Noonan.



What's next Now with a position focused solely on live-action content (including upcoming new productions Henry Danger; Nicky, Ricky, Dicky, and Dawn; and Bella and the Bullfrogs), Noonan is primed for new challenges. "The transition from casting feels more seamless than some might imagine," she says. "The difference is now I look more at story and character. I'm looking through a bigger lens." -Jeremy Dickson

Outof

the frequent fliers club



Carlos Biern CEO of BRB Internacional

1. In my carry-on

No liquids to avoid slow luggage pick-up, specifically in Madrid's terrible T4 terminal.

2. My go-to gadget

For really long trips, I use a "gadget" called Advil-and it works in flight mode.



3. On the fly

A 12-hour flight includes great ideas, gin and tonics and, in recent years, surfing the web on airlines like Lufthansa.

4. Preferred in-air tunes

Any chill-out music from my beloved half-home island of Formentera.



5. Best in-flight food

I prefer Asian or Middle Eastern flavors.

6. Best power-lunch

Over Skype, Much shorter than the six-hour lunch you could have in Madrid for any kind of business

7. Window or aisle?

Always aisle, or a seat in the last row as it is usually more quiet.

On the circuit Notes for the industry travel diary



September 23 - 26

Cartoon Forum Toulouse, France

www.cartoon-media.eu

This year's event is again set to take place in the sunny Southwest of France. The pitching and co-pro forum for animated TV projects will see 80 projects pitched before an auditorium full of broadcasters and potential investors. New this year, attendees should get their speed-talking skills ready for Short Pitch sessions that allot anxious pitchers 10 minutes to make their case for a greenlight.



October 7-9

Brand Licensing Europe London, England

www.brandlicensing.eu

The number-one event for Europe's licensing industry returns this October for three days of meetings, discovering brands, and networking with industry bigshots, rights owners and agents. More than 280 brand owners are expected to showcase 2,200 brands, characters and images. So get ready to discuss brand strategy, find a new licensing partner, or spot the next big thing in licensing.



October 11-12

MIP Junior Cannes, France

www.mipcom.com

This annual global showcase of kids programming is expected to draw roughly 1,250 participants and 550 buyers. Shaking things up this year, organizer Reed Midem has moved the annual screenand-schmooze event to the Palm Beach Hotel, a little further down the Croisette. The new location provides more room for networking and screening facilities—as well as those views of the sea that Cannes is best known for.



A full listing of Industry Events is available at kidscreen.com/events







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New York's
FlickerLab
moves its liveanimation
capabilities
across platforms
and into new
opportunities

BY JEREMY DICKSON

ith today's tech-savvy SVOD-gobbling kids, who are more connected than ever, it's becoming increasingly advantageous for content creators to develop properties that are fully compatible across all platforms. Arguably, no one knows this better than Manhattan-headquartered technology and educational content studio FlickerLab.

Always watching for efficient solutions to keep pace with evolving industry trends, the company has found a significant level of success over the last five years with its proprietary live-animation tool, the Cartoon Broadcast System (invented in 1996 and acquired by Flickerlab in 2009). CBS allows multi-camera animation to be produced the same day it airs at a much lower cost than traditional broadcast animation—less than US\$1,000 per finished minute of animation in some cases. FlickerLab is now moving live animation to the next level. Using its entire suite of live-animation capabilities, including CBS, the studio has launched MAKEngine (Mobile Animation Kinetics Engine), a unique user-generated animation tool.

Next evolution

MAKEngine lets anyone from kids to professionals create any style of full-sound animation on any mobile device in a matter of seconds. (CBS places animation elements, such as backgrounds, characters and effects onto a timeline, and the sound—featuring live performers or pre-recorded tracks—is synced automatically for output directly to broadcast, tape or digital video file.) The inexpensive, small-file size content

can be played back immediately or uploaded to a server to be shared and curated.

According to Flickerlab founder Harold Moss, the MAKEngine recorder can be used on any platform as a stand-alone app or integrated into existing iOS, Android or web apps. "We've created an entire cross-platform ecosystem," says Moss. "Its applications include performable eBooks, updatable animation and live-animated avatars. The same system could also be used to put animation onto a YouTube channel."

He notes that MAKEngine was first created for use in FlickerLab's upcoming *Animgram* app for iOS, Android and the web that will be released in the US in September.

Going mobile

Animgram is touted as the world's first animated messaging and social media app. Along with enabling users to send text and pictures, it will let them send Animojis (short full-sound cartoons) and Animgrams (fully customizable animated characters).

"For the app, we're also reaching out to independent animators and designers that have some great characters. We're prepared to offer them revenue-sharing deals for original content that could then be developed explicitly for *Animgram*," says Moss.

In related FlickerLab news, the company is currently producing the final episodes of its health-focused animated web series *How the Body Works with Chloe and the Nurb* for children's wellness site Kidshealth.org. According to Moss, there is still talk of a possible spinoff series for TV. [©]

JustLaunched

Co-pro *Ella* strides across the globe



Just like its main character's feisty spirit, DHX Media's new animated preschool series *Ella the Elephant* has taken on all challenges to notch ratings and licensing success. Produced in association with Canada's TVO Kids and FremantleMedia Kids & Family Entertainment, the series made its television debut in September 2013 on Canada's TVO, Knowledge Network and Télé-Quebec, and on MiniMini in Poland. Now with sales in more than 50 territories, the future's looking bright for the little elephant and her magic hat.

On-air



Strong female voice Based on the acclaimed books by Carmela and Steve D'Amico, the 52 x 11-minute series follows the adventures of a little elephant with a big heart who lives on Elephant Island. Bob Higgins, EVP of children's and family entertainment at Fremantle-Media, says FME was attracted to the co-pro opportunity based on the strength of the property's fiercely independent main female character. "This is a little girl who does not say no to any challenge, and she is a leader amongst her friends," says Higgins. "She's not a Pollyanna-ish optimist, but she is always willing to look for the bright line on the horizon. This is a character we want to hang out with."

So far, viewers agree. The series, distributed in North America, the Middle East and India by DHX and throughout the rest of the world by FME, is currently tops in its Disney Channel US time slot across children's channels for kids two to five. On ABC2 in Australia, *Ella* has drawn an average share of 46% for children zero to 15 in 2014. Higgins says one of the biggest challenges of developing the IP for TV was the task of creating an expanded world for Ella to live in. "We went from the books where it was Ella, her grandmother and a couple of friends, to creating a full universe on Elephant Island and a multitude of friends for Ella," says Higgins. "The challenge was making sure we didn't lose the heart of the books or the integrity of the characters."

What's next As the show continues its worldwide rollout with marketing support from on-air promos, online games, and Facebook and Pinterest social media activity, the property will soon head to retail shelves across the US, Canada, the UK, Ireland, Spain, Latin America, the Middle East, Australia and Norway, thanks to a new deal secured with Florida-based toyco Jazwares. As the IP's global master toy partner, Jazwares will launch an Ella the Elephant product line featuring plush, dolls figures, playsets, vehicles, roleplay and musical instruments. While there are no digital deals to report yet, Higgins assures that in a year's time kids will be able to experience Ella in app form. He says the biggest opportunity is for Ella to become a lifestyle brand that can push a message of strength and optimism for girls. "When you think of toys, so many girl toys have a certain body image, but Ella is an elephant so she doesn't look like a toothpick. She's someone girls can aspire to be. -Jeremy Dickson



PBS KIDS heads to Chromecast

accordance with its mandate to be an innovator in children's educational media, and to be as accessible to as many kids as possible, PBS KIDS recently extended its popular free *PBS KIDS Video* app to Android and Windows devices. It also inked a deal with Apple TV to provide on-demand access to thousands of full-length PBS KIDS episodes and clips. Moreover, the pubcaster has secured a deal with Chromecast marking the first time Google has partnered with a kids content provider specifically for its WiFi-enabled digital media player. The deal, sealed on the heels of a content renewal agreement with Netflix, puts PBS KIDS in a position to delve deeper into second-screen streaming experiences.

"If you think about Chromecast as a two-screen experience from an educational perspective, there are great things we can experiment with like providing additional information about a show to the person holding the mobile device or play-along mobile content for kids while they watch a show," says Sara DeWitt, VP of PBS KIDS Digital. "This is just the beginning of how we might experiment in the second-screen space."

DeWitt notes that PBS Kids modelled its Chromecast initiative on one of its recent app launches, *PBS Kids Super Vision*. Currently available on iOS devices, but heading to Android this fall, the app lets parents keep track of their kids' screen time.

"It's a second-screen experience where the parent syncs their his or her phone to the child's desktop or tablet experience with pbskids.org, and as the child plays, the parent gets real-time information about what he/she is watching or playing, and for how long," says DeWitt.

She adds that PBS KIDS's cross-platform projects boost the overall exposure of the brand.

"They help all of the properties get new eyeballs. We are in the same situation as all of the other media providers, in that we're trying to figure out what's the right mix. We didn't do this to necessarily boost TV ratings, because kids aren't necessarily using TV in the same ways they used to." –|eremy Dickson

NowTrending-Media

What's bubbling up in kid content culture

Half-hour Sesame Street

In a clear nod to the surge in mobile device usage and online viewing, PBS will begin broadcasting and streaming a shortened half-hour version of iconic preschool series Sesame Street from September 1. The condensed version will air on weekday afternoons to complement the hour-long version that will continue its morning broadcast. And in a first, PBS will stream more than clips of the program by offering select full episodes of the 30-minute show for free on pbskids.org, the PBS KIDS Video app and the PBS KIDS Roku channel.



AR gets more kids outside

A new report from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that nearly three-quarters of US teens aged 12 to 15 spend at least two hours a day watching TV and using a computer. Fifteen percent of teens watch four or more hours of TV daily and almost 12% use their computers for four or more hours per day (the teens were not asked about smartphone usage). So, it's not surprising that the children's entertainment industry is seeing improvements in new augmented reality experiences that aim to get more kids outside and active. The new DreamWorks Dragons Adventure World Explorer app from DreamWorks Animation and Microsoft and Disney Citizenship's Disneynature Explore app are perfect examples. The former integrates GPS mapping technology transforming the real world for on-the-go kids while the latter's 3D offering is designed for outdoor adventures. With AR and VR top of mind in the business, expect to see more real-world innovation down the road.

-Jeremy Dickson



Sales at Hasbro's girls division are at an all-time high. *Frozen* remains a hot toy prospect. Lego now has a girl-targeted brand that's selling like hotcakes. The boys action figure category, meanwhile, is stalling. We separate fact from fiction when it comes to

gender shifts in the toy aisle.

BY AARON HUTCHINS

isney Princess is a queen in the doll aisle, consumers have been very kind to Lego Friends, and Rainbow Loom's popularity now stretches from North America to Europe. From arts & crafts and construction to dolls, girls seem to be scooping up toys at an unprecedented rate right now.

To put things in context, Hasbro's girls division generated US\$300 million in annual sales in 2003. Fast forward to 2013, and the division topped US\$1 billion in annual sales for the first time, driven by the successful revival of My Little Pony and its spin-off line Equestria Girls. And the stellar sales of Hasbro's Nerf Rebelle bow-and-arrow set, driven by the popularity of archery-heavy movies like *The Hunger Games* and *Brave*, certainly didn't hurt.

Looking at Lego, boys represented 90% of its consumer base in 2011, but one demographic left behind offered plenty of room for growth.

"Lego recognized that half the children's population were girls," says Lutz Muller, president of Vermont-based Klosters Trading Corp. The Danish toyco launched girl-targeted Lego Friends construction toys in 2012,

and retailers couldn't keep up with demand. The success of the line helped Lego topple Mattel as the world's most profitable toymaker. The brick-builder's 2013 net profits reached US\$1.12 billion, a 9% increase over the year prior. Muller estimates girls now make up approximately 40% of Lego's total market.

And then there's Disney's *Frozen*, the highest-grossing animated movie of all time. The female-centric tale caught fire in consumer products circles, generating big sales for licensees like toycos Mattel and Jakks Pacific. In fact, merchandise based on the film outsold that of any other licensed product over the first quarter of 2014, according to The NPD Group.

So, from the headlines, it would appear as though girls toys have never been more popular, but analysts say the success of these IPs shouldn't be misread as growth across the entire girls market.

"If you strip off [Disney] Princess—particularly *Frozen*—in the last nine months, the girls business has been largely flat," says Stephanie Wissink, a senior research analyst with Piper Jaffray in Minnesota.

For the first quarter of 2014, sales in Hasbro's girls division jumped 21% compared to last year. Mattel, on the other hand, saw Barbie sales tumble 15% in Q2 2014, the eighth time sales of the brand have dropped over the past 10 quarters. "It's really just been a rotation," Wissink adds. "It's not as if value was created in the channel. It's just that the apple pie got sliced into different sizes, and different players got each piece."

Across the US, doll sales have remained relatively unchanged—generating roughly US\$2.7 billion at retail annually, according to NPD—over the past three years. One brand's popularity comes at the price of another being left out in the cold. "This time next year, we're probably going to be talking about the decline in the girls toy market because of *Frozen* going down," says Needham & Co. toy analyst Sean McGowan. "If it's not next year, it's the year after."

Boys, don't cry

Recent headlines are different when it comes to boyland. Hasbro's boys division struggled to find momentum last year, and the company's net income for 2013 dropped by 15%. Spider-Man action figures, for example, appear to be caught in a web of movie sequel fatigue. In the week leading up to this year's release of *The Amazing Spider-Man 2* (the franchise's fifth movie in 12 years), some Toys 'R' Us outlets had a promotion for 25% off all Spider-Man figures.

Captain America hasn't come to the rescue of boys toy sales—or master toy licensee Hasbro—either. When *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* hit theaters on April 4 to rave reviews, Cap had an average of 72 running feet of shelf space at Walmart, Target and Toys 'R' Us combined, according to Klosters' Muller. But by May 2, the superhero's real estate had dropped to a total average of 14 feet among the three major retailers. Inevitably, space was needed for Godzilla, Transformers, X-Men and How to Train Your Dragon 2 toys.

"These movies cannibalize each other," says Muller. "If you look at the action figure movies per year in 2007, there were four. This year, there are 12 movies." Hasbro is the toy

licensee for six of these films, but more action figure movies arriving in theaters means a shorter life cycle for their toys in stores, regardless of their manufacturer.

What's left is an uneven sales cycle that drives the boys business, says McGowan. He predicts the return of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles to the silver screen in August, and the Star Wars movie set for release in 2015, will breathe life back into the boys toy aisle. In addition, Disney's purchase of Marvel and Lucasfilm should make sales smoother throughout the year. "[Disney] has no interest in having Spider-Man compete at the box office with Star Wars," he says. "It will probably manage the [movie] release schedule in a way that will wind up optimizing toy sales as well."

Away from the big screen, there's more competition for the toy industry-especially when it comes to boys-from app games like Angry Birds, Subway Surfers and Fruit Ninja. There are entertainment options aplenty that kids can play anytime, anywhere-for free. "It's not sucking dollars out of the toy industry. It's sucking hours out of the toy industry. There's less time to play with traditional toys," contends McGowan. "And here are little old toy companies trying to get you to pay for plastic by the pound."

Not to be left behind, Hasbro paid US\$112 million last year for a 70% share in mobile game developer Backflip Studios. Mattel, however, might be more cautious about joining the world of electronic gaming after its 2006 console HyperScan, which combined

gaming and card collecting, failed to ignite sales. And while video games have been around for decades, kids don't appear to be spending any less money on toys as a result of their popularity.

"The children's toy market [in the US] has been sitting at US\$20 billion every year for 10 years, regardless of video game cycles or tablets," Wissink says. "Children will still desire to play with physical toys. It's just that they're going to expect those toys to interact with content."

Where sales come to life

When it comes to capitalizing on both physical toys and interactive games, Activision has flown above the competition.



To tap into boys' love of digital/physical hybrid toys like Skylanders, Hasbro and Rovio are Expanding theirTelepod line with an Angry Birds Transformers mash-up

Skylanders were the top-selling action figures in the US over the first half of 2013, according to NPD and Activision's internal sales data, and the franchise as a whole generated more than US\$1.5 billion in revenue in its first three years on the market.

Skylanders' success has enticed other heavyweights to enter the ring. Within one year of launching, Disney Infinity exceeded US\$550 million in revenue, and the recent announcement of Infinity 2.0 adds Marvel superheroes to the mix. At E3 Expo in June, Disney Interactive president Jimmy Pitaro made his goal for Infinity clear. "We will be a billiondollar franchise," he said. Nintendo, for its part, announced that it will also enter the toy-to-life gaming ring with amiibo, which is set to launch later this year with the release of Super Smash Bros. for Wii U.

While new play patterns emerge, however, traditional toy companies refuse to fall behind the curve. Last year, Hasbro partnered with Rovio to introduce Telepods, a physical toy that utilizes QR codes to scan characters into an app game. The toyco has since sold more than one million Telepods and will introduce new brands like Transformers to the toy line later this year.

Toyland of opportunity

Kids in Europe and North America may want toys that

this trend isn't as pronounced yet in Eastern Europe, Russia, Latin America and parts of China, according to McGowan. "These are high growth markets for traditional toy purchases because...they can't yet afford a high-priced tablet to give to their kids," he says. "Both Mattel and Hasbro are seeing far higher growth rates in Russia than they are anywhere else in the world." Hasbro opened a Russian office in 2009. Mattel followed suit in 2012 and has since reported that its sales in Russia tripled last year.

Even in North America, opportunity can still be found away from tablets or TVs. When girls construction newcomer GoldieBlox won a competition from accounting software company Intuit for a highly coveted Super Bowl advertisement, its commercial featured a massive Rube Goldberg machine. The video quickly went viral. Weeks later at the 2014 Toy of the Year Awards, GoldieBlox and The Spinning Machine nabbed top prize for both the People's Choice Award and Educational Toy of the Year. In arts & crafts, Rainbow Loom tugged girls away from the screen to become the runaway success of 2013 and win the TOTYs' top prize.

"Now what I'm waiting for is for someone to come out

with an activity kit that is specifically designed for boys,"

Muller says. "And if they do this cleverly enough, you will combine physical play with interactive elements, but find there is a totally new segment to be had." (3 Who says girls don't like construction? Lego built up its oncetiny female fan base with Lego Friends .30 22 kidscreen lulv/August 2014



A grassroots movement on Etsy leads to a crafty debut

DIY Adventure Time

aitlin Harpin gets plenty of emails from friends with hyperlinks to artsy projects mixing pop culture and knitting. As an assistant editor at Potter Craft, a New York-based publisher of craft and doit-yourself books, she's checked out a fair number recently based on Cartoon Network's *Adventure Time*. A quick search for the series name on the US-based e-commerce site Etsy reveals roughly 6,700 handmade items for sale, including everything from hand-painted shoes to crocheted minidolls. Fans of the toon, it seems, have embraced its whimsical aesthetic and brought it to the world of DIY design.

"I was at Comic-Con a few years ago and noticed so many people were wearing homemade costumes and sporting Finn hats or swords that they made themselves," Harpin says. So her colleagues at Potter Craft figured, why not pitch an Adventure Time craft book to licensor Cartoon Network Enterprises?

CNE was already well aware of the show's popularity on Etsy. "In a lot of instances, we're looking at what's being developed in helping to create our own CP program off of it," says Pete Yoder, VP of consumer products for North America. In fact, the book proposed by Potter Craft was a perfect fit. "It's just extending what we know the fans are already doing," he adds.

Cartoon Network's first venture into the land of DIY books, Adventure Time Crafts: Flippin' Adorable Stuff To Make From The Land Of Ooo hits shelves in October across North America. Among the projects fans can make are earrings, embroidered wall art featuring Jake making bacon pancakes, and coasters made from tiny beads.

But what makes one brand catch the eye of crafters over others? The reason DIY fans embraced Adventure Time may be more than just its cuteness factor. The characters are relatively uncomplicated in terms of design. "When you take that very simple look and feel, it lends itself very well to arts & crafts because there's not a lot of detail and intricate work that you would need to do," Yoder says. And while he doesn't see other IPs in the company's

current portfolio working with this type of project, Yoder says it could be the jumping-off point for more Adventure Time craft books down the road.

Knitting CPs together

Figuring out which IPs might work for such endeavors may have already been decided, judging by what's out there on sites like Etsy and Pinterest right now. For example, there are close to 4,000 items inspired by Despicable Me on Etsy, whose popularity Harpin attributes to the minions' simple shape. Other companies, meanwhile, might find reason to further investigate the DIY world.

Among traditional toy categories, arts & crafts may not be as big a money-maker as plush, construction or action figures. Outside of youth electronics, however, it was the fastest-growing category in the US last year, according to NPD. Arts & crafts have grown consistently in US retail sales, from US\$997 million in 2011 to US\$1.16 billion in 2013, though one might attribute much of its boost to bracelet-making phenomenon Rainbow Loom. Nonetheless, away from the toy realm, Americans spend more than US\$29 billion annually on crafting, according to the Craft & Hobby Association.

Back in the Land of Ooo, Adventure Time's craft book has been designed to appeal to the property's wide range of fans that includes six-year-olds and full-grown adults. There are projects like easy-sew finger puppets to full-on knitted sweaters that require following a complicated pattern to complete. However, nothing in the book is designed to be as complex as the creations posted on Etsy by some of the property's more ardent crafters. "When you're creating a craft book, you have to think about simplifying things, especially a book like this where there's a mix of different skill levels," Harpin says. Crafting newbies can try their hand by starting with Jake, the series' shape-shifting magical dog. Since he can morph into any form, it's impossible to make him too big, get his body shape incorrect or mistakenly add a few extra arms. —Aaron Hutchins



The Story of Me, Part 2

Nickelodeon zeroes in on the makeup of Hispanic kids and their families

BY ERIN MILLER

last month's Kaleidoscope, we examined what the world of today's kids in America looks like. As this is the most ethnically diverse generation of kids the US has ever seen, with Hispanics accounting for the fastest population growth, The Story of Me Part 2 hones in on the makeup of Hispanic families in the US, and the attitudes and behaviors that embody today's eight-to 14-year-old Hispanic kids. It's critical to understand how the current Hispanic kid population is both similar and different from the total US population of kids and families. (It's important to note that as we refer to the general/total population, this is inclusive of all households in the US, and not exclusive of Hispanic households).

As reported last month, today's family is exceptionally kid-focused, and at the heart of kids' lives is their family. This also holds true among today's Hispanic households, but there are some key differences. For example, 69% of Hispanic kids live with both biological parents, as opposed to 62% of kids among the general population. Further, 77% of Hispanic kids live with their biological dad, versus 66% of kids in the total population. Keeping with dads, 83% of Hispanic kids say they look up to their dad, versus 72% of kids among the general population.

It's evident Hispanic kids are spending a lot of time with both their parents, yet nine in 10 wish they could spend even more time with them—a similar sentiment with the general population of today's kids.

Similarly, when asked where a kid's favorite place to be was, almost 90% of Hispanic kids (versus 77% for the total population) said "at home." Home represents a place they feel safe and protected. Speaking of safety, the report found there were significant differences around safety and schools

among Hispanic kids. Forty-one percent of Hispanic kids said they feel safe at school, compared to almost 77% of the total population. This disparity could be attributed to a few factors, one being that, on average, Hispanic kids come from lower socioeconomic households compared to the general population (according to the US Census Bureau), which directly relates to attendance at schools in low SES areas. Social exclusion could also be a concern, especially among first generation Hispanics (defined as kids not born in the US). Not only can language often be a barrier, but kids can also feel a sense of not fitting in with others at school.

In analyzing first generation Hispanic kids, it was found that they're more likely to see themselves as more emotional (in comparison to second and third generation Hispanic kids), and less confident, cool, active, stylish, popular and brave. However, they believe they're smarter than other kids their age. Perhaps this is attributed to having a broader, more global perspective, or they are truly a product of their generation as eight in 10 post-millennial kids (general population) believe they're smarter than other kids their age. Similar to first generation Hispanic kids, second generation Hispanics kids (defined as US-born kids of parents not born in the US) feel pressures to fit in at school, but also feel pressures at home. This generation of Hispanic kids can often take on the dual role of kid and adult, helping their parents (who may not speak much English) navigate the adult world, and taking on adult responsibilities. As a result, second generation Hispanic kids are more likely to say they like being their age, and are in no hurry to grow up.

So, how are these two groups of Hispanic kids similar? Both first and second generation Hispanic kids tend to have more responsibilities at home, and are very achievement-oriented. They understand the sacrifices their parents made for their families and, therefore, they're more focused on learning, more likely to want to go to college and expect the best from themselves at a young age. As for third generation Hispanic kids (defined as US-born kids of US-born parents), they are the most similar overall, to the general population of US kids. ③

This concludes our research report on Hispanic kids and households. In our next Kaleidoscope report, we'll explore the ever-changing landscape of social media and how it impacts today's young teens.

For more information, contact Kaleidoscope@nick.com (Source: Nickelodeon Group Consumer Insights Research, "The Story of Me," Spring 2014)

A major focus of the Brand and Consumer Insights Department at Nickelodeon Kids & Family is to live and breathe kid culture. We continually track and identify trends, and explore what it means to be a kid and teen today. In an effort to keep you in touch with our audience and give a voice to our consumer, we've created the Nickelodeon Kaleidoscope. Every month, Kaleidoscope will capture key areas of interest across the kid and family cultural landscape, provide an understanding of attitudes and behaviors, and report on trends and buzz.

Muse of the Month

Free to express me

Lexie, who has Asperger's, uses music for personal happiness and educational growth



ight-year-old Alabama native Lexie knows a thing or two about adapting. Diagnosed with high-functioning Asperger's syndrome at an early age, Lexie is constantly learning and finding new ways to develop, shine, and feel great about herself. This includes tapping into her musical talent.

Music is Lexie's favorite creative tool. By writing her own songs and making music videos, she is able to articulate her thoughts and feelings, which are hard to express with Asperger's. As she puts it, "Music makes me feel happy, awesome and like a rock star. Lexie the rock star!" Not only does Lexie love creating music to express herself, her mom says that she has also used her songwriting skills to improve her memorization, vocabulary and penmanship at school.

For Lexie to flourish, it's all about expressing her true self. Typical of others in her generation, she's realistic and practical: "I want to be me, because being me is better than being someone else," she says. Media, especially TV and movies, can help kids like Lexie by depicting characters who face similar struggles and use concrete strategies (like Lexie's songwriting) to successfully work through their issues. - Brittney Huntington



insight Insight Kids is a research and strategic consulting company dedicated to catalyzing our clients to build innovative, impactful and inspiring experiences for kids and families. To be further inspired by Lexie and Insight Kids, visit www.insightstrategygroup.com/insightkids/.

Cool or Not? The educational apps vs. comic books edition



Educational apps/games

Boys 8 to 11 (239)	Girls 8 to 11 (235)	Boys 12 to 15 (234)	Girls 12 to 15 (224)		Boys 8 to 11 (257)	Girls 8 to 11 (255)	Boys 12 to 15 (255)	Girls 12 to 15 (236)
21.8%	23.4%	11.5%	9.4%	Totally way cool *	35.8%	22.0%	16.9%	8.1%
11.3%	14.9%	14.5%	10.3%	Very cool *	17.5%	11.4%	21.2%	13.1%
20.1%	29.4%	29.5%	29.5%	Kinda cool *	27.2%	20.8%	27.8%	27.1%
12.1%	11.1%	15.4%	21.4%	Not cool *	7.8%	15.7%	17.6%	22.0%
34.7%	21.3%	29.1%	29.5%	Totally un-cool *	11.7%	30.2%	16.5%	29.7%
9.1%	10.3%	12%	11.8%	Don't know what it is	3.7%	3.8%	4.1%	9.6%



Comic books

* Excludes "Don't know what it is" responses



Cool or Not? is part of KidSay's Feb/March 2014 Trend Tracker. These one-of-a-kind research reports are published 10 times a year and provide a quantitative and qualitative picture of kids' likes, dislikes and trends gathered through in-school surveys with US kids ages five to 15. Contact Bob Reynolds (913-390-8110 or bob@kidsay.com).



• Entry Deadline: October 17, 2014 •

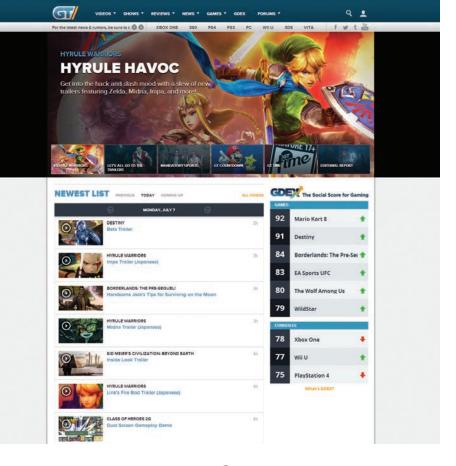
Accepting entries on Aug 4!

Kidscreen is gearing up to celebrate the market's best digital media products and platforms for kids with the third-annual iKids Awards.

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Winners will be announced live at the Kidscreen Awards ceremony to be held during Kidscreen Summit 2015 (February 23-26, Miami).

Enter online at ikids.kidscreen.com/awards



Levelling Up

Defy Media turbo-charges its gaming portfolio with the acquisition of three Viacom gaming sites

BY DANIELA FISHER

efy Media is tapping into the collective culture of today's on-the-go tweens and teens. The L.A.-based company owns and operates a host of YouTube channels and digital properties—including hit brands Smosh, Clevver Media and Shut Up! Cartoons—across web, mobile, social and emerging OTT platforms.

With more than 155 million views a month and one of the largest networks of owned YouTube channels, the company recently made a move to expand its online offerings for tech-savvy tweens and millennials, snapping up gaming sites Addicting Games, Game Trailers and Shockwave from Viacom, while the owner of Nickelodeon took a minority stake in Defy.

The exchange

The deal is the latest in a series of big media players investing in digital entertainment networks. Earlier this year, Disney bought multichannel network Maker Studios for US\$500 million. Last year, DreamWorks Animation acquired You-Tube tween/teen network AwesomenessTV for US\$33 million. Lionsgate, meanwhile, partnered with RocketJump Studios a few months ago.

These buys speak to the value of digital content for youth. And while Viacom isn't buying directly into Defy, it's investing more in digital content. Defy gets access to Viacom's audience and distribution strength, while Viacom



can tap into Defy's YouTube presence and content-creation talent, along with Defy's ability to grow brands via YouTube.

"We look at ourselves and I think [Viacom] agrees that we have the best infrastructure on record for creating digital content and original IP. We have multiple channels with millions of subscribers on YouTube. We have 22 regularly produced shows that do half a million views or more per episode," says Keith Richman, president of Defy Media. "We have experience in taking brands and extending them, and that's what's most exciting to us right now."

Collectively, Defy's brands have amassed 40 million You-Tube subscribers and 55 million followers on social media. The digital studio also recently crossed the 10-million mark in mobile app downloads.

Why more gaming?

Already a player in the gaming vertical, Defy owns Smosh Games, The Escapist, The Warp Zone and Gamefront. The new additions come with large audiences, which Defy hopes to tap into for marketing its existing properties.

"We saw a really unique opportunity to expand our reach and audience, and we saw an opportunity to get more invested in an area we believed we wanted to go into, which is casual gaming," says Richman.

"If you really look at it in the casual gaming space, there aren't that many brands, period. There were a couple of big properties that got in there early and managed to stay there fairly consistently."

Viacom purchased Games Trailers, Shockwave and Addicting Games in 2006. All established brands, they each pull in a unique audience, along with new revenue streams for Defy, particularly with younger demos that Defy's sitesdon't currently reach.

"According to Google Analytics, Defy sites drew 63 million uniques last month on the web, and these properties add another 17 or 20 million, so it's a pretty meaningful reach extension," notes Richman.

What's next

Having acquired these gaming properties, Defy will be turning its attention to content for the sites: "Our goal is to invest in programming around them," says Richman, adding that the digital studio has not yet developed a specific game or series to put on the ex-Viacom sites.

In addition, Defy will be looking to extend the sites' social presence. Addicting Games and Shockwave both have site visits per month in the low millions, but they have yet to move into mobile apps or platforms like Facebook. For Defy, a social media and pop culture powerhouse, extending the gaming properties to new platforms is also a priority.

"Overall, we get a meaningful amount of our traffic from social. When we look at those properties, they haven't gotten nearly as much," says Richman. $^{\circ}$

Where kids content shines

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Winging it

BirdBrain makes school cool with a kit that lets kids animate their arts & crafts

Starting up BirdBrain Technologies is looking to animate classes around the globe. A product of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania's innovative tech landscape, the startup is making electronic kits that let creators of all ages—from kids to college students—build their own robots.

Launched in 2010, the company has its roots in the Carnegie Mellon Robotic Institute's CREATE Lab. Its founder, Tom Lauwers, came up with the idea for the kits while working on his PhD. After graduating, he launched BirdBrain to commercialize lab projects that had piqued interest in the education community.

The startup is banking on the rise of the maker movement and kids immersion in STEM. Children have to tap into their DIY side to use BirdBrain's products—there are no building materials included in the kits. Instead, they can use whatever is on hand.

Nuts and volts Out of the gate, the company launched the Hummingbird Robotics kit, which lets kids create robots from traditional arts & crafts materials like paper, cardboard and felt. Using Hummingbird, kids can make things like dolls or cars that move and light up.

"This would be like an arts and crafts project, plus you embed motors and sensors and LEDs in it," says Lauwers. "Now instead of a cityscape, you've made a cityscape with cars that move around, and skyscrapers that light up, and sensors that turn those lights on when it's daytime and off when it's nighttime."

Billed as a kit that's both educational and fun, it teaches kids basic computer science and programming, as well as electronics and design in a very accessible way. "To have kids program something that's physical is very motivating for a lot of them," notes Lauwers. "It's one thing to see your program draw graphics on the screen. It's another thing to see your program make a robot drive around or make a robotic face smile."

BirdBrain recently launched an updated version of Hummingbird on Kickstarter. At press time, the campaign had raised US\$42,074, against a goal of US\$30,000. The updated version of the original (launched in 2012) for kids four to nine has added programming functionality.

What's next Currently, BirdBrain has two products—Hummingbird and Finch, which is a robot designed for computer science education that launched in 2011. The company is now working on getting Hummingbird into more schools. It's also developing a range of curriculum and training support materials for teachers.

"We've always been school-oriented," says Lauwers. "But what we want to do with Humming-bird and with Finch is to enable teachers and students to have this kind of learning experience during the regular school day." -Daniela Fisher

The Digits

Numbers that speak volumes about kids and technology

Physical-digital mashups are a hit with kids in emerging markets like Russia:

90% of gamers ages

six to 12 want smart toys

(Interpret)



of 10- to 18-year-olds visit YouTube via web or app on a weekly basis. Instagram ranks second with 92%.

Almost half

of US kids ages two to 12 are now playing on tablets, up from 38% in 2013.

(The NPD Group)

Ignore the hype: 57%

of teens still say they use Facebook more than any other social site

(Forrester)

Digital spending for back-to-school stuff in the US will

increase by 16%

this year to 50.17%

(eMarketer)



As Europe's annual animation pitch-fest prepares to land in Toulouse for the third year running, we thought it was time to preview some of the event's promising projects



Hullabalooba Taking inspiration from iconic animators Tex Avery and Terry Gilliam, *Hullabalooba* is a pure slapstick comedy created by Studio Outo's Tero Takalo, Jussi Saarela and Janne Kariniemi. The series follows the seafaring voyages of three bumbling pirates, two lazy seagulls, and a parrot, aboard the pirate ship Ms. Fortune. By the end of each episode, the pirates' everyday blunders cause an eruption of mass chaos, much to the seagulls' amusement.

Producer: Studio Outo (Finland) **Style:** Mixed media (2D, 3D, cut-outs)

Format: 52 x five minutes **Budget:** US\$1.9 million

Status: With partial funding from the Finnish Film Foundation (SES) in place, the first 13 episodes are currently in production, with three completed. A trailer and bible are available, and the first series has been pre-sold to pubcasters YLE Finland, SVT Sweden and NRK Norway. Ireland's Monster Entertainment has also signed on as worldwide distributor.

6 to 8

Claude Based on the successful book series from author Alex T. Smith, this comedic toon follows the odd adventures of a small, round, beret-wearing dog named Claude and his unlikely best friend Sir Bobblysock—a highstrung sock who doesn't speak. Claude's misadventures begin in each episode after his owners, Mr. and Mrs. Shinyshoes, leave for work. A foiled bank robbery, a circus mix-up and being mistaken for a doctor are among some of the show's humorous plotlines. Sixteen South's Colin Williams and Michelle Forde are heading up the series.

Producer: Sixteen South (Northern Ireland)

Style: 2D animation **Format:** 52 x 11 minutes **Budget:** US\$3.7 million

Status: Currently in development with a bible, trailer and one script completed. Sixteen South is readying two scripts for Cartoon Forum, is in negotiations with broadcasters, and plans to take the series to MIPCOM

and Kidscreen Summit.





Mick—The Kobold

Chef This cooking show for kids from the mind of Animationfabrik CEO Joern Radel, features a CG-animated kobold (a sprite from Germanic folklore) named Mick who has a passion for cooking. After the world-hopping Mick meets nine-year-old Max—a real boy who shares Mick's love of food and experimenting in the kitchen—they team up with a magic saucepan. The trio creates a TV cooking show that teaches their audience about the origins of recipe ingredients. Each episode culminates in a feast—of course.

Producer: Animationfabrik (Germany)

Style: Live-action/CGI animation

Format: 26 x 21 minutes

Budget: US\$258,000/half hour

Status: In early development with a bible, scripted pilot, teaser being storyboarded, and casting underway for Max. Launching at Cartoon Forum with production expected by September 2015, the series' cooking theme is generating interest from a number of potential partners.

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Tee and Mo Based on a successful suite of 10 interactive games that launched on the CBeebies website in 2013, supported by a 10 x one-minute interstitial series, Plug-in Media is turning to long-form storytelling. The producer's first original IP focuses on the daily adventures of Mo, a first-time monkey mum and inventor, and her baby boy, Tee. This loving and humorous toon offers a social-emotional curriculum that teaches toddlers and caregivers how to work as a team and solve problems creatively.

Producer: Plug-in Media (UK)

Style: 2D animation

Format: 50 x seven minutes

Budget: US\$3.6 million

Status: In development with a bible, story premises and pilot script ready to go. UK pubcaster CBeebies is supporting the next interactive commission (apps, radio and YouTube), and is supportive of a longer TV series.

Kiva Can Do Led by an imaginative five-year-old named Kiva Khan, this series was created by Kavaleer CEO Andrew Kavanagh. It features a STEM curriculum and follows the adventures of Kiva, her best friend Saul, and her dog Angus—whom she constructs from shoeboxes and paper towel rolls. Inspired by the boom in crowd-funded girls construction and science toys, the series also draws inspiration from pioneering female innovators like Damini Kumar and Sally Ride.

Producer: Kavaleer (Ireland)

Style: 2D animation **Format:** 52 x 11 minutes

Budget: Approximately US\$5.4 million

Status: In early development with a pitch bible, script and core concept designs, characters and locations already produced. Funding has been secured from The Irish Film Board, and a teaser should be ready for Cartoon Forum.



4 to 5







I already have 23 Spider-man figures at home. Can I have an **iPad** instead? We lot of **time** into **ma** viral. I still love a pratfall. I sometimes use the spicy sauce in the dessert or the caramel sauce in the lamb chicken

challenge was the **humbling** factor.

- Kids say the darndest things. Klosters Trading Corp.'s **Lutz Muller** on why action figures are having a tougher time at retail right now.
- Keith Richman, from Defy Media, reiterating the company's motto when it comes to marketing content
- Nickelodeon's Sarah Noonan confesses her love for comedy legends Jerry Lewis and Steve Martin
- How to make in-flight food more palatable (is that possible?) according to BRB's Carlos Biern
- Pete Yoder, Cartoon Network VP and fledgling crafter, admits to the difficulty of attempting the more complex Adventure Time projects

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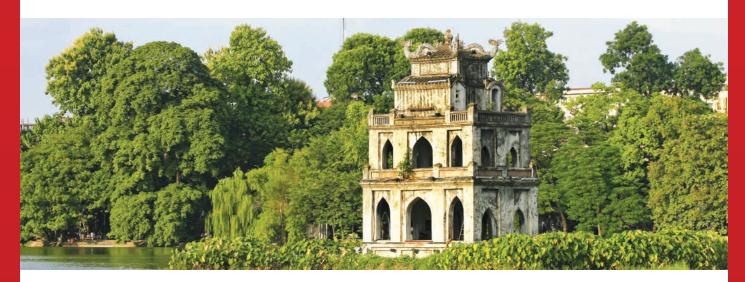
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